

Vernonia students were off to the gym for an assembly and to get their new schedules. The Scappoose students then assisted the students to their classrooms and gave them guided tours of our building. Our Scappoose students came in for lunch shortly afterwards and then they headed home for the day.

It is now 3:30 and the halls are quiet and the Vernonia student's grades 6–12 are in class listening to teachers and working away on the latest assignment given to them. It is like nothing ever happened and they don't seem to know that they are even in Scappoose. They do know that there is teaching and learning going on, friends have reunited and the teachers that love them are there to support them and teach them.

I am so in awe of our staff and students who have handled this situation with grace, enthusiasm and superb organizational skills. The Vernonia students and staff have been very appreciative and they do have "stories" to tell. I talked to a couple of students today where one told me he still had 6 feet of water in his house. Another student told me he lost everything including his house. The lesson of the day was "giving and receiving".

Thank you all for your support and "class act" that your sons and daughters displayed today, even at 7:30 am in the morning! Report was that most everyone was on time!

If any of you wish to volunteer to "man" the donation areas at the high school, please let us know via email scappoosehighschool@scappoose.k12.or.us. Mr. Casey Honl has volunteered to coordinate and supervise the donations! People are now wanting to donate appliances and furniture, and we are trying to locate a facility that we can store the items in. We are still accepting cash donations with checks made out to "Vernonia School Project". We are hoping to get all students a new pair of tennis shoes. I have 60 donated from Nike at this time. Lastly, we can't forget the food drive to fill our own food bank in Scappoose as well as sending food to Vernonia. The U-haul in front of the school will be open school hours Wednesday through Saturday am. Thanks again for being such a great community! You are loved!

IN TRIBUTE OF BERTRAM M. LEE
SR.

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise in tribute to Bertram M. Lee Sr., a trailblazing entrepreneur who exemplified the truest ideals of courage, fortitude and commitment. Bertram believed that there was nothing he could not achieve or conquer with personal dedication and faith as his instruments.

Bertram, who died in October 2003, gained national recognition as a successful entrepreneur and philanthropist. He broke through the barriers that sought to limit his vision to accomplish more than was expected of a person of his background. He launched large, sophisticated firms and expanded opportunities for other Black entrepreneurs and executives in media and telecommunications industries.

As lead investor and president of Dudley Station Corporation he was in the vanguard of minority ownership of major media properties. His efforts culminated in 1982, when New England Television Corporation, a minority-led consortium acquired WNEV-TV, Boston's CBS affiliate. Under his leadership as President of the corporation from 1982–1986, both the value of the station and its journalistic quality increased.

Bertram went on to become the first minority owner of a professional sports franchise as co-owner and managing partner of the Denver Nuggets basketball team. In banking, he showed outstanding leadership as chairman of the board of directors of Boston Bank of Commerce. He also served on the boards of Shawmut Bank and Reebok International, Inc. A common thread woven through all of his accomplishments was his ability to expand existing boundaries and open opportunities in areas that were traditionally closed to African-Americans.

In politics, we worked together on the historic campaign to elect David Dinkins, the first African American mayor of my beloved city of New York. We shared a view of the world that believed in, and struggled for, the empowerment of African Americans no matter where they were on the globe. I urge my colleague to join me in recognizing this great American.

END OF SESSION

HON. DENNIS A. CARDOZA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Speaker, as we prepare to adjourn for the holiday season, we eagerly await the chance to spend time with our loved ones.

Radio music and advertisements offer cheery Jingle Bell tunes, the Christmas tree on the West Lawn has been lit, and we leave with a spirit of benevolence, wishing all a merry Christmas.

But unfortunately, Madam Speaker, not all who like Christmas will have it be merry because of a Grinch mean and scary who vetoes our bills with nary a thought.

The Grinch stole Christmas, Madam Speaker. He's robbed from the WHOS, and there's not a one weaker. And who are the WHOS? Why, any child can tell you—the WHOS are the children, the hungry, the poor, the ones we should help, not shove out the door.

While the tone I take is somewhat lighthearted, the subject matter is serious. The President, at almost every turn, has thwarted our efforts to help the most needy and vulnerable in our society.

First, the President has been callous towards the most vulnerable—our children, especially foster children.

The President vetoed a 15 million dollar increase for those children who surrounded by domestic violence are forced to take the safest way out—run. These youth depend on programs authorized under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act that fund homeless shelters and counseling to diffuse conflict at home and enable them to be reunited with their families.

Mr. Speaker, the 5 million dollar increase Congress approved for the Education for Homeless Children and Youth program—also vetoed by the President.

To the orphaned foster youth who are denied services when the clock strikes midnight on their 18th birthday, the President turns his back on them. Homeless, without health insurance, they become just another statistic to be quoted in the list of "throwaway" youth.

The President denied the sum of a mere 500,000 dollars to create a national registry on child abuse, a provision Congress passed with bipartisan support in the Adam Walsh Act.

Currently, Madam Speaker, child abusers need only to cross state lines to avoid prosecution and find employment as teachers or daycare providers. This national registry would track the offenses of predators to prevent abuse, and it is unconscionable to deny funds for this program.

That is not all that's been taken from under the tree. It's just the beginning, I hope you will see.

We demand so much from parents this day in age, Madam Speaker. They balance full-time parenting with full-time employment, often, at the cost of family life.

They make this sacrifice with the promise of providing a better future for their children. They send them to school and trust it will better equip them for tomorrow.

However, this President has turned a blind eye towards the education of our children.

The President's priorities translate into budget cuts for programs like Head Start, who will be forced to shut their programs door on 34,000 children.

Despite Congressional intent to increase funding for the 6.9 million children receiving special education, the President wants to reduce that funding and slash K–12 education by 1.3 billion dollars.

Madam Speaker, the President's priorities must not be allowed to stand. All children, no matter what their station in life, deserve a quality education and this Congress will continue to fight to ensure we honor our obligations to them.

And while the President will enjoy many Christmas carols this season, he wants to eliminate funding for Universal Newborn Hearing programs.

Madam Speaker, I could go on and on. This short, but illuminating list, best highlights the differences between the priorities of our two parties.

Congress will continue to fight for these vital programs and to ensure that the least among us are well protected. As we adjourn for the holidays and celebrate the season with our families, let us get in the Christmas spirit and rededicate ourselves to the welfare of the most vulnerable.

"And the Grinch with his Grinch-feet ice cold in the snow, stood puzzling and puzzling, how could it be so? It came without ribbons. It came without tags. It came without packages, boxes or bags. And he puzzled and puzzled 'till his puzzler was sore. Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before. What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store? What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more."

Thank you, happy holidays.